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REMARKS

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In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 12 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 101 as lacking utility. The acts of setting and selecting have patentable utility. In order to expedite allowance, both claims have been amended to include imaging.

Claims 1-5 and 19 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Phillips, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,899,681). Claims 6-11, 13-18, and 20-23 were objected to being dependent on a rejected base claim, but allowable if amended into independent form. Claims 24-31 were allowed. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections of claims 1-5 and 19, including independent claims 1 and 19.

Independent claim 1 claims setting a transmit level, and automatically selecting a setting for at least one contrast agent imaging parameter as a function of the transmit level and in response to the setting of the transmit level. Phillips, et al. do not disclose these limitations.

Phillips, et al. disclose automated power level setting for contrast agent imaging (title; and abstract). In particular, the transmit power is set for low mechanical index contrast agent imaging (col. 1, lines 48-50; and col. 2, lines 47-49). The transmit level is set to minimize destruction while maximizing signal-to-noise ratio (col. 2, lines 49-54). Different contrast agent imaging detection techniques and associated settings are described as useful for different purposes (col. 3, line 31-col. 4, line 4). For setting the transmit level, the contrast agent imaging is activated to identify in-flow of contrast agents (col. 4, lines 29-35). The contrast agent imaging may be altered to image a portion of the scan plane (col. 9, line 65-col. 10, line 6). After setting contrast agent detection, the transmit power level is automatically set (col. 5, lines 26-28 and 37-39; and figures 3 and 5). The cited acts of figures 3 and 5 show detecting to set the transmit level. Phillips, et al. do not change detection, but adjust transmit levels or timing to set the transmit power. There is no suggestion to automatically select a setting for a contrast agent imaging parameter as a function of and in response to setting the transmit level.

Independent claim 19 recites altering a transmit level and a transmit sequence in response to a single user input control, with at least two different transmit levels being associated with at least one of the transmit sequences. Phillips, et al. alter transmit level and/or timing to set a transmit level. The process for setting transmit level is automated. There is no suggestion to alter the sequence and transmit level in response to a single user input control.

Dependent claims 2-5 depend on independent claim 1, so are allowable for the same reasons as claim 1. The dependent claims are patentable over Phillips, et al. for additional reasons. Claim 2 recites setting transmit level by a user with a single control, so is allowable for the same reasons as claim 19. Claims 4 and 5 recite selecting the setting, or one of the setting and a system gain as a function of the measured characteristic. Phillips, et al. set the transmit level.

CONCLUSION:

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seeks early allowance thereof. If for any reason, the Examiner is unable to allow the application but believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any issues, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at (650) 943-7554 or Craig Summerfield at (312) 321-4726.

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